

SENATOR CARSTEN: Okay, the amendment...

SENATOR SCHMIT: Well, let me take off with the committee amendment first, and then I'll take the amendment.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Okay, are you going to take the committee amendments, Senator Schmit?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Yes, I will.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Okay, proceed, please.

SENATOR SCHMIT: I'd like to explain the committee amendment to LB 1230. And I want to emphasize that the committee amendment is the bill, so I hope you would listen very carefully to my explanation of the committee amendment...

SENATOR CARSTEN: Just a minute, Senator Schmit, please. (Gavel.)

SENATOR SCHMIT: And you should have a copy of the...white copy in your bill book. I would encourage you to glance at it from time to time so you would know what we are referring to as we move along. I know that time is late and many of you have made plans to leave. I would hope that we would be able to move rapidly with the bill. But I will, of course, want to explain the amendment thoroughly, and then if there are any questions, I will try to answer them. But I would like to say at the outset that LB 1230 is a bill which would stimulate the development of the ethanol industry in Nebraska. I'd like to emphasize also that it was 15 years ago that this Legislature established the first ethanol development bill in the United States. At that time the entire idea was ridiculed. It was often stated there would never be such an industry. Today it is a very important industry, a very vital part of our energy supply, and one which we should, I think, take into account and, therefore, this bill is a natural growth of that earlier legislation. In order to provide the funds to develop this industry we would impose a check-off fee on the commodities which have the most to gain from the utilization of our surplus grain products. This is a bill which is a true economic development bill. We have several other bills that are in this Legislature that are moving along toward passage, and I have no quarrel with those bills. But this is a specifically oriented bill, and one which I believe you can support. The construction of ethanol plants, the hiring of people to operate the facilities after the construction is